

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 4288

DEPARTMENT PASS USAID AND USIA

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TAGS: EAID, US, JO

SUBJ: JOINT COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

REF: AMMAN 4083; AMMAN 3881

1. SUMMARY: THIS CABLE OUTLINES EMBASSY SUGGESTIONS FOR JOINT COMMISSION IN EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS. EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT THIS COMMISSION CENTER ATTENTION, AT LEAST INITIALLY, ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND ARCHAEOLOGY. THIS WOULD BUILD ON ALREADY EXISTING BASES AND WOULD PROBABLY OFFER EASIER IMPLEMENTATION PROSPECTS THAN EMBARKING IN OTHER FIELDS. IT WOULD ALSO HELP SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT EARLY MANIFESTATION OF THE VALUE OF THIS COMMISSION IS IMPORTANT TO ESTABLISH ITS IMPORTANCE IN THE MINDS OF JORDANIANS. END SUMMARY.

2. ORGANIZATIONALLY, THIS COMMISSION MIGHT PERHAPS BEST BE HEADED BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND THE JORDANIAN MINISTER OF CULTURE AND INFORMATION. ON THE JORDANIAN SIDE, OTHER MEMBERS COULD INCLUDE THE PRESIDENT
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OF THE UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN, MINISTERS OF EDUCATION AND OF

TOURISM AND ANTIQUITIES AND SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE MINISTER OF CULTURE AND INFORMATION. ON THE AMERICAN SIDE PERHAPS DIRECTOR OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, PRESIDENT OF A LEADING U.S. UNIVERSITY AND DIRECTOR OF USIA. ONCE BASIC THRUST OF ACTIVITIES WAS DETERMINED, INDIVIDUAL WORKING GROUPS WOULD TAKE OVER TO FLESH OUT DETAILED PROGRAMS, WHICH, OF COURSE, WOULD BE REPORTED BACK TO COMMISSION. MEMBERSHIP WOULD DEPEND ON WHAT IS TO BE UNDERTAKEN, BUT AT OUTSET WE WOULD ENVISAGE SEPARATE COMMITTEES AT LEAST FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND ARCHAEOLOGY. IN THOSE BODIES MEMBERS OF PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS INTERESTED IN JORDAN SHOULD BE INCLUDED; AMERICAN

FRIENDS OF MIDDLE EAST AND FORD FOUNDATION IN EDUCATION; AMERICAN CENTER OF ORIENTAL RESEARCH (ACOR) (OR IT PARENT AMERICAN SCHOOLS FOR ORIENTAL RESEARCH - ASOR), AND POSSIBLY SMITHSONIAN FOR ARCHAEOLOGY.

3. AS INDICATED, AIM SHOULD BE TO GET PROJECTS UNDERWAY. THESE MIGHT INCLUDE: A. EDUCATION

-- EXCHANGE OF PROFESSORS BETWEEN UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN AND AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES FOR BOTH TEACHING AND INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH IN FIELDS JOINTLY DETERMINED BY COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE. AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST COULD BE: AGRICULTURE, ISLAMIC AND ARABIC STUDIES, TRAINING OF TEACHERS, POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENT AND BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH.

--SPONSORING OF JOINT RESEARCH PROJECTS IN JORDAN UNDER LOCAL AEGIS OF UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN, BUT INCLUDING OTHER JORDANIAN INSTITUTIONS AS APPROPRIATE. FIELDS WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS PARA, BUT APPROACH WOULD BE MORE INSTITUTIONALIZED.

--IMPROVING TEACHING OF ENGLISH STARTING WITH UNIVERSITY LEVEL, BUT ALSO INCLUDING LOWER LEVELS. FORD FOUNDATION, WHICH HAS ALREADY DONE CONSIDERABLE WORK WITH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, COULD HAVE MAJOR ROLE.

--ATTEMPTING TO ASSIST GOJ IN GETTING INCREASED COMPENSATION OR FUNDING FROM GULF STATES FOR JORDANIAN SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITY WHICH ARE PROVIDING THESE STATES WITH EDUCATED AND TRAINED PERSONNEL.

-- INCREASING PLACEMENT OF QUALIFIED JORDANIANS IN U.S. UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES THROUGH TAPPING MORE EFFECTIVELY AVAILABLE PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS AS WELL AS SEEK EXPANSION OF CU PROGRAM. AFME SHOULD BE DEEPLY INVOLVED. VISITS BY AMERICAN EDUCATORS INDICATES THERE ARE SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ABOUT WHICH NO ONE IN CONFIDENTIAL

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AMMAN HAS INFORMATION. PROJECT WOULD REQUIRE MORE MANPOWER IN U.S. THAN AFME HAS AVAILABLE.

B. ARCHAEOLOGY.

--SEEKING ADDITIONAL FUNDING SUPPORT FOR AMERICAN EXPEDITIONS IN JORDAN THROUGH FOUNDATIONS AND NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES. PARTICULARLY SEEK BACKING FOR MOUNTING DIG RUNNING OVER MANY YEARS. ASOR-ACOR IS KEY ORGANIZATION IN U.S., BUT SMITHSONIAN AND OTHER MAY BE INTERESTED.

--STRENGTHENING ACOR AMMAN FINANCES AND MANPOWER TO DEAL MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH JORDANIAN DEPARTMENT OF ANTIQUITIES IN CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF ANTIQUITIES. DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IS DIRECTLY RELATED AND FUNDING SHOULD BE SOUGHT FROM DEVELOPMENT SOURCES, PERHAPS INCLUDING AID.

-- SPONSORING EXHIBIT OF JORDANIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS IN U.S. MUSEUMS AND UNIVERSITIES, AND RELATEDLY SEEKING CLOSER TIES WITH AMERICAN CENTERS OF MIDDLE EASTERN ARCHAEOLOGY THROUGH EXPANDED EXCHANGE VISITS.

--ENCOURAGING PRODUCTION OF FILMS ON JORDANIAN SITES FOR SHOWINGS IN U.S. TO PROMOTE TOURISM SCHOLARLY INTEREST IN JORDAN.

4. OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST TO COMMISSION COULD INCLUDE TELEVISION, PARTICULARLY EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION, AND PERFORMING ARTS AND SPORTS. WITH REGARD TO ARTS, OBTAINING LEADING DANCE GROUP FOR PROJECTED SUMMER

1975 JERASH INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL COULD HAVE HIGH PRIORITY.

5. FOR COMMISSION TO BE EFFECTIVE, SOME ADDITIONAL FUNDING ABOVE PRESENT LEVELS FOR ACTIVITIES OUTLINED ABOVE WILL BE NEEDED. MANY JORDANIANS BELIEVE TOO LITTLE ATTENTION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL FIELDS AND WOULD PROBABLY SEE LITTLE ADVANTAGE IN HAVING COMMISSION UNLESS IT MEANT THAT U.S. INTERESTED IN PLACING GREATER EMPHASIS THESE AREAS. WHILE COMMISSION APPROACH COULD RESULT IN MORE EFFECTIVELY USING PRIVATE RESOURCES, UNDOUBTEDLY SOME ADDITIONAL USG FUNDS WOULD BE REQUIRED.

6. AFTER DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS AND CONCURRENCE WE PROPOSE EXPLORE INFORMALLY WITH GOJ AS PRELUDE TO MORE FORMAL MEETING IN LATE AUTUMN (FOLLOWING END OF RAMADAN)
PICKERING

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